



NEWS

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CHP Officer Arrested in Workers' Compensation Fraud Case

First Case Concluded by CHP's New Workers' Compensation Fraud Section

(SACRAMENTO) California Highway Patrol Commissioner Mike Brown and Kings County Deputy District Attorney Patrick Hart jointly announced today the arrest of CHP officer Michael Jones, 32, of Coalinga. Jones faces 11 felony criminal counts (4 counts Insurance Fraud, 6 counts Making False and Fraudulent Statements For the Purpose of Obtaining Compensation, and 1 count Presenting a False and Fraudulent Claim). If convicted of all counts, Jones faces 15 years in prison and a fine of at least \$50,000. The ten year CHP veteran is the subject of the first case brought by the CHP's Workers' Compensation Fraud Section since it was launched by Commissioner Brown last October.

Jones is accused of filing multiple workers compensation claims for benefits to which he would not be entitled. During a three year period from 2002 to 2004, Jones allegedly made false statements to his CHP supervisors and medical providers regarding injuries for stress, back and knee problems related to his CHP duties. An investigation by the CHP Workers' Compensation Fraud Section over the past several months revealed that Officer Jones was involved in a variety of physical activities inconsistent with his claims of disability.

Immediately after his arrest in Kings County this morning, Officer Jones was fired by CHP Commissioner Brown. "It is always a sad day for me personally when we have to announce something like this, but I want to assure the taxpayers of California we are serious about cracking down on abuses of our retirement system," said Commissioner Brown.

"Fraud in this system not only deprives truly injured workers of benefits they need, but also significantly impacts the costs of workers compensation insurance," stated Chief Deputy Hart.

During his ten-year career with the CHP, Jones was a patrol officer assigned to CHP offices in Monterrey, San Jose, Hanford, and Coalinga.

Information leading to Jones arrest was developed through information provided the Workers Compensation Fraud Section from sources within the CHP. The 12-person fraud section has reviewed over 400 files of recently retired CHP employees claiming disability retirements.

The Department has set-up two methods for the public or CHP employees to report suspected workers' compensation fraud by CHP personnel. A toll free telephone hotline is available for those who wish to talk to an investigator personally. The number is 1 (866) 779-9237. Tips may also be sent by email through the CHP Website at www.chp.ca.gov. Information may be provided anonymously.

“Being a CHP officer is a dangerous job. Programs such as workers' compensation are there to help those people legitimately injured in the performance of their official duties. The CHP will have zero tolerance for abuse of this valuable program,” said Commissioner Brown.

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